

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-11

NEW YORK TIMES
17 AUGUST 1982

U.S. Aide Cites War Missing

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16 (AP) — President Reagan's national security adviser said today that the Administration did not rule out the possibility that some Americans still are being held captive in Southeast Asia nine years after United States troops were pulled out of the Vietnam War.

"We have no confirmed evidence, but we have enough information not to rule out the possibility that some of our unaccounted-for servicemen could still be held alive in Indochina," said William P. Clark. According to various estimates, nearly 2,500 Americans remain unaccounted for.

"One of the greatest tragedies of Vietnam," he said, "was that the United States cannot be certain, even to this day, that the treaty we signed to disengage ourselves from the conflict was fully complied with in regard to our prisoners of war and missing in action."

Mr. Clark, speaking to the national convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Los Angeles, pledged that the Administration would "use all means available, including the full intelligence apparatus of the United States, to get to the bottom of this matter."

"Should we find these reports are

true, we are prepared to take appropriate action to insure that no American remains a captive," he said. "Simultaneously, we are continuing our efforts to insure the remains of those American prisoners still in Indochina are returned home."

A copy of Mr. Clark's speech text was released by the White House.

The deputy White House press secretary, Larry Speakes, said Mr. Clark's statement did not suggest that any new evidence had been uncovered and that his remarks reflected a previously held policy not to write off the possibility that Americans were still being held captive.

"But we're leaving no stone unturned to try to find out if there are," said Mr. Speakes. He noted that there were unconfirmed reports from time to time that the missing have been sighted in Southeast Asia.

Mr. Speakes said Mr. Clark's statement had not been enunciated previously. "That is a new statement; we have not made that statement" publicly, he said. "We have previously made those statements to M.I.A. families."